

NSC BRIEFING

3 December 1957

NSA review completed

## SITUATION IN EAST GERMANY

- I. East German Communists are adopting harsher internal policies, which may lead to trouble. These policies include:
- A. Tighter security controls throughout country and on access to East and West Berlin by East Germans with view to stopping refugee flow (5,000 per week average).
  - B. Strengthening of border guard (30,000), placing it under East German army control.
  - C. Wage cuts, raising of work norms, and intensified agricultural collectivization.
  - D.   
 East German Communist Party plenum last week passed measures to repress political opponents which anti-Ulbricht circles expect to be a "witch hunt" against them.
- II. Decision to adopt tougher policy was probably made when Khrushchev and Mikoyan visited East Germany last summer.
- A. It reflects Soviet determination to crack down on dissident forces unleashed by 20th party congress policies and to resume complete repression under Stalinist Ulbricht.
    - 1. Revisionist tendencies in Poland have disaffected intellectual circles.
    - 2. High refugee flow of military age group (25% of total) reflects disgruntled youth. Over weekend refugee flow shot up.

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B. Soviets also want greater contribution from GDR to Bloc economy.

1. During the past year East Germany has fallen behind on its exports to the Bloc.

III. This tougher policy will probably lead to increased tensions within East Germany.

A. Similar norm increases and wage cuts led to the riots in June 1953.

B. Blocking of the safety valve of flight to the West will further heighten popular discontent.

C. But no major upheaval likely as long as 350,000 Soviet troops remain.

IV. By-product of situation has been increased harassment of West Berlin.

A. Immediate aims appear to be to curtail refugee flow to West, to hamper Western intelligence activities, and to stop currency smuggling.

B. New measures include:

1. Plans for customs barrier between East and West Berlin.

2. Confiscation of West Berlin products in transit to West Germany, etc.

V. However, no evidence that Soviets intend to interfere with Allied access to Berlin, though they continue using East Germans in attempt to erode Allied position there.

A. They are taking steps, however, to try to force West to deal with GDR concerning travel of Western officials within East Germany.

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1. Latest step in this direction was Soviet statement on 28 November to American embassy personnel in Warsaw that they should apply to GDR for visas to transit East Germany to West.

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